



Outcome Assessment of International Professional Exchange Programs in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Executive Summary

December 2002

Purpose of the Outcome Assessment

In September 2001, the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of Policy and Evaluation contracted with T.E. Systems, Inc. (TES) to conduct an outcome assessment of three international professional exchange programs operating in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania—the *International Visitor Program*, the *Community Connections Program (Business for Russia Program)* and the *Sister Cities Program of Philadelphia*. The purpose of this outcome assessment was to document and report on the overall results, or outcomes, that these international professional exchange programs have on the local hosts/resources and the community of Greater Philadelphia.

Overall Assessment of the Programs

Hosting and/or interacting with foreign exchange visitors had a positive impact on the hosts/resources in Philadelphia. The international professional exchange programs helped enable the U.S. Government to promote mutual understanding between the people of the United States and people of other countries. These findings are supported by the following study results.

- 97.1% of hosts/resources agreed that hosting and/or interacting with foreign visitors participating in exchange programs promotes mutual understanding among Americans and foreigners.
- 94.2% reported having “basic to advanced knowledge” about the culture and country of the foreign visitors *immediately after* the hosting experience, compared to 75.3% *before* the experience.
- 85.5% shared information with their family, friends and/or colleagues about their experience hosting and/or interacting with foreign visitors.
- For every federal dollar allocated in Fiscal Year (FY) 2001 by the U.S. Department of State to support the three international professional exchange programs, an additional \$2.64 was generated by hosts/resources in Philadelphia in monetary and in-kind contributions. The U.S. Department of State allocated \$553,412.00 in FY 2001 to support the three exchange programs administered in Philadelphia.
- 74.7% indicated that the *importance or value* of international professional exchange programs was higher after the events of September 11, 2001.
- The most common reason given by respondents for volunteering with exchange programs was to “share useful knowledge and experience with their foreign counterparts.”

In addition, this evaluation assessed the degree to which the international professional exchange programs have reached the overarching legislative goals of the Fulbright-Hays Act—specifically related to hosts/resources in Philadelphia. This Act enables the U.S. Government to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchange. The goals of the Fulbright-Hays Act are to:

- Increase mutual understanding between people of the United States and people of other countries.
- Strengthen the ties that unite people of the United States with other nations.
- Promote international cooperation for education and cultural advancement.
- Assist in the development of “friendly, sympathetic and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world.”

Project Information

From September 2001 to December 2002, TES conducted the *Outcome Assessment of International Professional Exchange Programs in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*. TES administered an 11-page survey to 1,365 hosts/resources in the Greater Philadelphia area. The survey response rate was 46.6 percent. TES conducted 13 interviews with 38 program administrators from the Office of International Visitors and the Office of Citizen Exchanges of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, national programming agencies, the National Council for International Visitors (NCIV), and the International Visitors Council (IVC) of Philadelphia. In addition, TES interviewed 15 IVC hosts/resources and four IVC staff members, and conducted five focus groups with 46 IVC hosts/resources. Mr. Tomás Esterrich was the Contract and Senior Project Manager, Ms. Leslie Esterrich-Betancourt was the Project Task Leader and Senior Research Associate, and Ms. Nilda Anderson was the Focus Group/Interview Moderator and Senior Research Associate.

Information on the International Professional Exchange Programs

The *International Visitor Program (IV Program)* brings current and emerging foreign leaders to the United States to meet their American counterparts and gain a better understanding of American life and culture. The program is administered by the Office of International Visitors of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. Annually, the IV Program brings approximately 5,000 foreign visitors to the United States to meet with their counterparts in Washington, D.C. and across the United States. The program and logistical arrangements are handled by staff from the Office of International Visitors, national programming agencies, and Councils for International Visitors (CIVs) located in communities across the United States. Approximately 80,000 members or volunteers of CIVs in 43 states provide appointments, tours, homestays and/or home hospitality for visitors. The average visitor spends three to four weeks in the United States and travels to four or five communities across the country, including Washington, D.C.

The *Community Connections Program (Community Connections)* offers homestay-based, three-to-five week internship and practical training opportunities in the United States for entrepreneurs, local government officials, legal professionals, non-governmental organization leaders and other professionals from Eurasia—i.e., Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The Office of Citizen Exchanges of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State administers the program, which operates under the auspices of the FREEDOM (Freedom for Russia and Emerging Eurasian Democracies and Open Markets) Support Act of 1992. Since 1994, Community Connections, which incorporates the *Business for Russia Program (Business for Russia)*, has brought more than 12,000 participants from Eurasia. Hosting organizations located throughout the United States handle all logistical aspects of the program and coordinate the visits of each foreign visitor in their community.

The *Sister Cities Program of Philadelphia (Sister Cities)*, which is partially funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, provides foreign visitors with the opportunity to meet their counterparts in American cities and promotes city-to-city relationships through exchanges. The IVC of Philadelphia administers this program on behalf of the City of Philadelphia and the City's Department of Commerce. The city is linked with seven Sister Cities—Florence (Italy), Tel-Aviv (Israel), Torun (Poland), Tianjin (China), Incheon (Korea), Douala (Cameroon) and Nizhny Novgorod (Russia)—and three Partnership Cities—Kobe (Japan), Abruzzo (Italy) and Aix-en-Provence (France).

International Visitors Council (IVC) of Philadelphia

The U.S. Department of State relies on the expertise and assistance of a network of U.S. not-for-profit partner organizations, or CIVs, to administer the international professional exchange programs and to facilitate interaction between foreign visitors and hosts/resources from their communities. The IVC of Philadelphia, the partner organization for this study, was founded in 1954 with the encouragement of the U.S. Department of State, the City of Philadelphia, and corporations, institutions and community leaders of the Greater Philadelphia area. The IVC of Philadelphia employs nine full-time staff members, one part-time staff member, four office volunteers, and has 28 Board Members.

Summary of Findings

TES, in coordination with the Office of Policy and Evaluation and in conjunction with program stakeholders, developed 14 project objectives and prepared research questions that provided the foundation for this study. The project objectives and research questions were grouped into six major themes:

- Involvement with International Professional Exchange Programs
- The Hosting Experience
- Knowledge of Foreign Visitors and Countries
- The Multiplier Effect of International Professional Exchange Programs
- Expenditures and Economic Relevance
- The Events of September 11, 2001

The term multiplier effect refers to the expansion of the hosting experience beyond the initial contact between the foreign visitor and the host/resource to other people, and the initiation of additional activities. Examples of the multiplier effect include the sharing of information by the foreign visitor or host/resource with family, friends and colleagues, and/or the community-at-large; the initiation of new interests, professional activities and/or institutional partnerships; or the continued collaboration between the foreign visitors and the hosts/resources.

The following presents the summary of the findings for each of the six themes.

Involvement with International Professional Exchange Programs

- The *number of years* that respondents have hosted and/or interacted with foreign visitors participating in the exchange programs administered by the IVC of Philadelphia:
 - 12.6% – less than a year
 - 35.9% – 1 to 3 years
 - 34.2% – 4 to 10 years
 - 17.3% – over 10 years
- The *frequency of involvement* of respondents with foreign visitors during their *most recent year* of involvement with the IVC of Philadelphia:
 - 45.6% – once a year
 - 32.1% – 2 to 3 times a year
 - 12.3% – more than 3 times a year
 - 10.0% – never
- Hosts/resources participated in the following exchange programs funded by the U.S. Department of State and administered by the IVC of Philadelphia:
 - 58.0% with the International Visitor Program
 - 23.4% with the Community Connections and Business for Russia Programs
 - 22.4% with the Sister Cities Program of Philadelphia
- The following are the *primary reasons* hosts/resources volunteered their time with exchange programs administered by the IVC of Philadelphia:
 - 31.3% wanted to share useful knowledge and experience with their foreign counterparts.
 - 15.8% felt that meeting and/or hosting foreign visitors broadened their perspective.
 - 15.3% wanted to help improve the overall image of the United States in foreign countries.

The Hosting Experience

The following findings indicate the percentage of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that the hosting experience:

- 97.1% – promotes mutual understanding among Americans and foreigners.
- 93.1% – helps them learn about foreign cultures and countries.
- 82.0% – promotes peaceful relations between the United States and other countries.
- 80.9% – increases their appreciation of the United States.
- 80.0% – allows them to share U.S. values and beliefs with foreigners.
- 79.1% – increases their interest in international events and news.
- 78.3% – gives them the opportunity “to make a difference.”
- 71.1% – allows them to volunteer their time and resources in their community.
- 56.4% – helps them educate their children about other cultures and countries.

Knowledge of Foreign Visitors and Countries

- 75.3% of respondents reported having “basic to advanced knowledge” about the culture and country of the foreign visitor(s) *before* the hosting experience or meeting. However, 94.2% reported having “basic to advanced knowledge” about the culture and country of the foreign visitor(s) *immediately after* the hosting experience or meeting. 90.9% of the respondents reported that they *currently* sustain “basic to advanced knowledge” about the culture and country of the foreign visitor(s).
- Some types of information that hosts/resources shared with foreign visitors included:
 - 37.7% – profession or business
 - 26.0% – art and culture
 - 18.3% – education
 - 14.4% – personal and family life
 - 10.7% – the U.S. Government
 - 9.4% – legal and law enforcement
 - 7.8% – Philadelphia and U.S. history

The Multiplier Effect of International Professional Exchange Programs

- 85.5% of respondents shared information about their experience hosting and/or interacting with foreign visitors with family, friends and/or colleagues.
- 77.2% of the respondents’ family, friends and/or colleagues became interested in meeting and/or interacting with foreign visitors participating in the exchange programs.
- 67.5% of colleagues and 53.6% of family/friends of hosts/resources participated in conversations with foreign visitors and became directly involved with the hosting experience.
- 47.4% of all respondents maintained contact with foreign visitors after hosting and/or interacting with them primarily through e-mails (77.3%) and letters (44.0%).
- The nature of hosts’/resources’ contact with foreign visitors was:
 - 38.4% – personal
 - 28.4% – business/professional
 - 33.2% – personal and business/professional

- Host/resources participating in activities with longer time frames had a larger probability of maintaining subsequent contact with foreign visitors:
 - 78.3% of the *homestay hosts* maintained contact with at least one visitor.
 - 74.6% of the *home hospitality hosts* maintained contact with at least one visitor.
 - 61.0% of the *business internship hosts* maintained contact with at least one visitor.
 - 41.0% of the *professional resources* maintained contact with at least one visitor.
- 89.3% of all respondents stated they would have pursued an international friendship or relationship outside of their involvement with the exchange programs administered by IVC of Philadelphia, primarily because of personal interests (21.7%) and existing personal/professional connections with foreigners (20.3%).

Expenditures and Economic Relevance

The study findings indicate that the use of federal funds not only meets the legislative goals for which they are appropriated, but also stimulates private funding by hosts/resources in support of the legislative goals.

- For every federal dollar allocated in Fiscal Year (FY) 2001 (October 1, 2000 to September 30, 2001) by the U.S. Department of State to support the three international professional exchange programs, an additional \$2.64 was generated by hosts/resources in Philadelphia in monetary and in-kind contributions. The U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs allocated \$553,412.00 in FY 2001 to support the three exchange programs administered by the IVC of Philadelphia.
- During FY 2001, hosts/resources generated an average of \$96.40 per foreign visitor on food, lodging, transportation, entertainment, souvenirs/gifts, brochures, training materials and office supplies, for an annual total of \$259,097.38.
- That same year, hosts/resources generated \$888,108.71 in in-kind labor costs (approximately 8,427.68 labor hours at an average labor rate of \$105.38 per hour).
- In addition, hosts/resources paid individual and corporate membership dues to the IVC of Philadelphia, donated office and meeting space, and made other donations valued at \$312,997.00.
- 89.6% of the respondents indicated that exchange programs contribute to the economic growth and prosperity of Greater Philadelphia.

The Events of September 11, 2001

- 31.4% of respondents agreed that the events of September 11, 2001 increased their *level of awareness* of international professional exchange programs.
- 74.7% of respondents indicated that the *importance or value* of international exchange programs was higher after the events of September 11, 2001, while 21.0% indicated no change and only 4.3% indicated a decrease in importance or value.
- 82.2% of respondents felt the events of September 11, 2001 did not affect their *perceptions* of foreign visitors when hosting or interacting with them. However, 17.8% of hosts/resources stated that their perceptions of foreign visitors were affected by the events of September 11, 2001.

Conclusions

Involvement with International Professional Exchange Programs

The involvement of hosts/resources with international professional exchange programs through the IVC of Philadelphia is a long-term commitment, as demonstrated by the fact that more than half have been involved with the IVC of Philadelphia for more than four years. The majority of hosts/resources participated with exchange programs to share their professional knowledge and experience with their foreign counterparts, broaden their own perspectives, and help improve the overall image of the United States. The IVC of Philadelphia has sufficient hosts/resources to participate in the numerous programs that they administer each year. However, the number of hosts/resources surpasses the needs of the IVC of Philadelphia and some hosts/resources felt they were underutilized, which may be partly responsible for the small decrease in the frequency of host/resource participation from the first to the most recent year of involvement with the IVC of Philadelphia.

The international flair of the City of Philadelphia, the numerous industries located in and around the city, and the various academic institutions located in the Greater Philadelphia area makes the majority of hosts/resources in Greater Philadelphia more likely to appreciate the value and importance of international exchange programs, including international professional exchange programs sponsored by the U.S. Department of State. Overall, hosts/resources believe it is their “civic duty” to show their city, state and country to foreign visitors, in order to share their knowledge of the United States. In turn, hosts/resources learned about foreign cultures and countries from foreign visitors.

The Hosting Experience

The international professional exchange programs administered by the IVC of Philadelphia overwhelmingly met the legislative goals of the Fulbright-Hays Act, as they relate to hosts/resources in the Greater Philadelphia area. In addition, hosts/resources derived personal benefits and opportunities, such as: volunteering their time and resources in their community; educating their children about other cultures and countries; returning the hospitality they received abroad; networking with other hosts/resources; and improving their foreign language skills. The majority of hosts/resources learned from foreign visitors and experienced a change in their perspectives, which increased their appreciation of foreign visitors and their countries and cultures, along with their overall appreciation of the United States. Family, friends and colleagues of hosts/resources also developed a greater appreciation of foreign visitors, cultures and countries, the United States and the Greater Philadelphia area.

Knowledge of Foreign Visitors and Countries

Overall, the hosting experience helped hosts/resources learn about foreign cultures and countries and the perspectives of foreign visitors, and provided them with the opportunity to share U.S. values and beliefs with foreigners. Hosts/resources experienced a significant increase in knowledge of foreign visitors, cultures and countries immediately after the hosting experience, and the majority of hosts/resources sustained their increased level of knowledge over time, as indicated by their increased interest in international news and events. In addition, the knowledge of hosts/resources regarding foreign cultures and countries expanded to family, friends and colleagues through social and/or casual conversations or meetings.

The Multiplier Effect

The majority of family, friends and colleagues of hosts/resources participated in conversations and appreciated the opportunity to meet with foreign visitors. To a lesser extent than hosts/resources, family, friends, and colleagues volunteered their time with the IVC of Philadelphia and hosted foreign visitors in their homes and businesses. In addition, a small percentage of the hosts/resources prompted the involvement of their community with foreign visitors. A significant number of hosts/resources maintained personal and/or professional contact with foreign visitors after hosting and/or interacting with them. However, the majority of hosts/resources developed international relationships without the assistance of the IVC of Philadelphia, because professional, personal and/or social situations provided them access to foreigners, foreign cultures and countries.

The IVC of Philadelphia has done an outstanding job of prompting various personal and business/professional linkages between hosts/resources in the Greater Philadelphia area and foreign visitors participating in exchange programs. For example, the IVC of Philadelphia promoted these linkages through follow-on trips that they organized for hosts/resources to countries in Eurasia.

Expenditures and Economic Relevance

The international professional exchange programs administered by the IVC of Philadelphia contributed to the economic growth of the Greater Philadelphia area by generating an estimated \$2,013,615.09 in Fiscal Year (FY) 2001 (October 1, 2000 to September 30, 2001). For every federal dollar allocated in FY 2001 by the U.S. Department of State to support the three international professional exchange programs, an additional \$2.64 was generated by hosts/resources in Philadelphia in monetary and in-kind contributions. The U.S. Department of State allocated \$553,412.00 in FY 2001 to support the three exchange programs administered in Philadelphia.

The enthusiasm, devotion and extraordinary efforts demonstrated by the IVC of Philadelphia have been instrumental in developing the International Visitor, Community Connections (Business for Russia), and Sister Cities Programs as a sources of pride and economic growth for the City of Philadelphia.

The Events of September 11, 2001

The events of September 11, 2001 heightened the *importance* of international professional exchange programs for hosts/resources. However, the majority of hosts/resources stated that their *level of interest in and involvement with exchange programs* remained the same after the events. The majority of hosts/resources stated that the events of September 11, 2001 did not affect their *perceptions* of foreign visitors.

Overall Conclusions

The international professional exchange programs conducted in Philadelphia have provided thousands of Americans living in the Greater Philadelphia area with the unique opportunity to meet and interact with foreign visitors from all over the world. These opportunities to meet, talk, exchange, understand, learn, teach, and share ideas and knowledge with foreign visitors have provided hosts/resources with an opportunity to grow personally and professionally from the comfort of their homes or businesses. Whereas, foreign visitors must travel to the United States and spend time in various U.S. communities meeting and learning from their counterparts, U.S. hosts/resources only have to open the doors to their homes and businesses to learn about foreign visitors, cultures and countries.

The impressions that the majority of hosts/resources develop of foreign visitors, cultures and countries are both lasting and overwhelmingly positive. In addition, hosts/resources extend their knowledge to others around them, which spreads positive impressions and perceptions of foreigners to others members of the community. In effect, hosts/resources become “advocates” of the foreign visitors they have met participating in exchange programs. Their improved understanding of foreign cultures and countries stimulates their interest in international news and events, traveling to foreign countries, interacting with the diversity of their own community, and their desire to repeat the experience with foreign visitors from other countries.

The nature of the hosting experience motivates hosts/resources to spend their own money and time in support of international professional exchange programs administered by the IVC of Philadelphia. Some hosts/resources consider the hosting experience part of their overall community volunteer efforts, while others consider the experience part of their business and/or professional development. Regardless, international professional exchange programs and the foreign visitors participating in these exchange programs help foster the personal and professional development of hosts/resources in Greater Philadelphia.

Overall, international professional exchange programs provide an important opportunity for both foreign visitors and Americans to learn from one another, which helps to bring about mutual understanding among people with the capacity to effect positive change in their families, businesses, communities, cities and countries.

Highlights of Host/Resource Feedback

“The only true appreciation of other cultures comes through personal contact. Personal contact helps me expand knowledge of other cultures and avoid stereotypes.”

“We have to live together in the world. These programs are necessary to reduce conflict and move toward a more peaceful co-existence in the world.”

“Getting to meet people and learn about their culture and environment is essential to peace in the world...knowledge is power and understanding.”

“I’m in total support of the overall effort of the IVC, promoting and participating in a peaceful world by sharing our time, thoughts and experiences with people different from ourselves! This [organization] is VERY IMPORTANT!”

“One of the highlights of my year is hosting foreign visitors, either for a dinner or a homestay. I relish the opportunity to interact with people from all over the world and gain knowledge of their lifestyle and countries on a first-hand basis.”

“I strongly believe that the IVC is a valuable tool to strengthen friendship and mutual understanding throughout the world. [The IVC] shows other countries the willingness of the United States to recognize people of other countries as individuals, who simply live in other parts of the world.”

“I have enjoyed participating in IVC events and [the experience] has broadened my horizons by allowing me to interact with both foreign visitors and fellow IVC members. My overall experience hosting foreign visitors is overwhelmingly positive.”

“Mutual understanding between people from the U.S. and people of other countries is necessary, because we are interdependent!”

“The events of 9/11 reinforced my belief that exchange programs are an integral part of U.S. policy.”

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information about this outcome assessment, or to receive copies of this Executive Summary, please contact the Office of Policy and Evaluation at (202) 619-5307, by e-mail at evaluations@pd.state.gov, or by mail at State Annex 44, 301 4th Street, SW, Room 336, Washington, DC 20547.

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